

"Foreign Intervention by Cuba"

Armed Cuban intervention overseas began on 14 June 1959 with an attempted invasion of the Dominican Republic by a mixed group of Cuban soldiers and Cuban-trained Dominican guerrillas. It failed, as did similar efforts launched against Haiti, Nicaragua and Panama during the next three years. By April 1962, such armed attacks and the accumulation of evidence that the Cuban government sought to infiltrate and manipulate local governments and political institutions caused 14 Latin American countries to break diplomatic relations with Cuba.

Between 1961 and 1964 Cuba sent more than US\$1,000,000 as well as arms and military equipment to insurgent groups in Venezuela alone. Over US\$200,000 were sent to Guatemalan insurgents in 1963. In November 1963, a three ton cache of Cuban-supplied arms, ammunition and materiel was discovered on a beach in northern Venezuela. Documents subsequently seized by Venezuelan authorities proved that the arms were to have been used in an effort to disrupt the national elections scheduled for December of that year. Having continuously supported, trained and equipped Venezuelan guerrilla groups during the interim, Cuban army officers and non-coms landed again in Venezuela on 8 May 1967 with a fresh group of Venezuelan guerrillas. The principal Venezuelan groups receiving Cuban support during the decade of the sixties

were the "Armed Forces of National Liberation" (FALN) and the "Movement of the Revolutionary Left" (MIR).

In neighboring Colombia, the main group given Cuban arms, equipment and guerrilla training during that period was the National Liberation Army (ELN), a group which still continues to harass the democratically-elected Colombian government through kidnappings, armed attacks on farms and police-stations, and other forms of terrorism.

Cuban intervention in Africa began in 1964--65 when such guerrilla leaders as Ernesto "Che" Guevara were dispatched to the Congo (now Zaire) to participate in an armed insurrection launched in the eastern portion of that country. Guevara next appeared in Bolivia in 1967 as leader of a guerrilla group. He was captured and executed by the Bolivians in October, 1967. The current phase of Cuban intervention outside Latin America began with the Tricontinental Conference in Havana in January 1966, attended by more than 500 delegates, which created the African-Asian-Latin American People's Solidarity Organization (AALAPSO) to assist and coordinate the activities of assorted insurgent and terrorist groups. Increasingly linked to Soviet aims and objectives, Cuban armed intervention overseas has shifted away from Latin America in recent years toward involvement in the Near East and Africa. Cuban pilots flew combat as well as training missions in Soviet-supplied MIGs for the

-3-

People's Democratic Republic of Yemen (PDRY) during active phases of that country's conflict with North Yemen in 1973--74. A Cuban armored brigade using Soviet vehicles, later turned over to the Syrian Army, was on the Golan Heights front in Syria in the wake of the Yom Kippur war.

Cuban military cadres have been training Somalian guerrillas, both in Cuba and in Somalia itself, since 1974 in preparation for attacks against neighboring Ethiopia and Kenya. Similar training as well as combat assistance was given to rebels in the former Portuguese colony of Guinea-Bissau prior to its independence; several Cubans were killed and one was captured in the field by Portuguese troops. When it became apparent in mid-1975 that the Soviet-supported Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA) was losing its struggle for control of that country to the combined forces of the National Front for the Liberation of Angola (FNLA) and National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA), Cuba began preparations to send technicians and combat troops to Angola. They began to arrive there in late September to use the sophisticated weaponry sent in simultaneously by the USSR. An estimated 4,000 to 5,000 Cuban military personnel are in Angola today.